(Area in lakhs ha.)

	State/U.Ts.	Net Area sown	Area affected by alkali nity	% of Alkali Area to total Net area sown
6	Madhya Pradesh	193·11	1·64	0·85
7	Maharashtra	180·19	0·59	0·33
8	Punjab	42·15	7·18	17·03
9	Tamil Nadu	55·47	0·04	0·07
10	Uttar Pradesh	172·09	11·00	6·39
	TOTAL :	1063·84	35·81	3·37

**Includes the area of arid Rajasthan and Gujarat.

High prices of Text-books

*260. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that high prices of books act as a disincentive for poor and middle class families to allow their children to pursue their studies;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to make books available at cheap rates for students in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) In pursuance of the resolve expressed in the National Policy on Education, 1986 to make available quality books at low prices, several measures are continuing at Government level. The Central Government initiative for school students of classes I-XII is implemented through the National Council of Educational Research and Training, (NCERT). The pricing of NCERT text books is done on a no-profit no-loss basis. The Council does not price its text books for classes I to VIII beyond Rs. 15/- and absorbs the losses, if any. The National Book Trust operates a scheme of subsidised publication of university level text/reference books and technical books of diploma level. The University Grants Commission also provides development grants to universities and colleges, *inter-alia*, for purchase of books by the institutions.

Till 31st March, 1990, the Central Government supplied white printing paper at subsidised rates to States and Union Territories for the production of school text books and exercise books to make them available to the students at reasonable prices.

(d) Does not arise.

2498. [*Transferred to the 26th March, 1992*].

Removal of restrictions on imports

2499. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that free market access and removal of restrictions on imports in favour of the multinational and monopoly

houses likely to lead to large scale displacement of Indian farmers and strain the scarce foreign exchange reserves; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Fire in Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar

2500. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fire broke out in the Laboratory of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar, Uttar Pradesh;

(b) what was the loss incurred due to the fire and the cause of the fire;

(c) whether it is also a fact that enquiries are being conducted by various Government agencies into the affairs of this Institute; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to improve the functioning of the Institute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) and (b) Sir, A minor fire occurred on 2-9-91 causing loss of some records and fittings worth Rs. 2000/-. The exact cause of the fire is not known.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A Committee has been constituted to conduct a review of achievements, mandate, constraints and problem of I.V.R.I.

Education programmes for Primary Agriculture Co-operative Societies

2501. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the "Education Programmes" for the primary agriculture co-operative societies in Rajasthan have been undertaken by the National Co-operative Union of India during the last few years;

(b) if so, whether any study to find out the impact of such education programme on the development and growth of primary agricultural co-operative societies has been made;

(c) if so, when and the finding thereof; and

(d) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Project is under implementation in the selected societies in two district *viz.* Jaipur and Udaipur in Rajasthan.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. A study was conducted in 1990-91. The study revealed that in the covered districts there was increase in the membership especially of SC/ST, share capital and working capital of cooperatives. The study also revealed increase in the agricultural production of the members of primary societies in the area resulting in increase in the income of the members.

(d) Government of India on receipt of the report has advised the NCUI to make the project personnel accountable for creating an impact in the area of the education programme and also strictly monitor the performance of the projects.